

TOTALLY INDYPENDENT

Newsletter of Haringey Solidarity Group

www.haringey.org.uk

"I am truly free only when all human beings, men and women are equally free" - Mikhail Bakunin

TWO MORE HARINGEY ESTATES SAVED FROM DEMOLITION

The two estates in Wood Green, Sky City and Page High, have been saved from demolition. People power does work, and at times, common sense may prevail.

This latest U turn makes a total of seven estates saved since Haringey Council adopted its policy on mass demolition of council housing 5 years ago: Summersby Road, Larkspur

Close, Tamar Way, Helston Court, Pagin House and Russell Road, the four lower-rise blocks at Hillcrest, Sky City and Page High.

Resident objections also stopped the Council from building on part of Lordship Recreation Ground, to rehouse people whose homes were set for demolition.

There are still 15 estates at risk

of demolition, and the fight goes on.

One demolition ballot is scheduled in the borough, at Love Lane in North Tottenham, where the developer is the controversial Lendlease - who were of course the preferred bidders for the defunct Haringey Development Vehicle. The ballot is expected by April 2019.

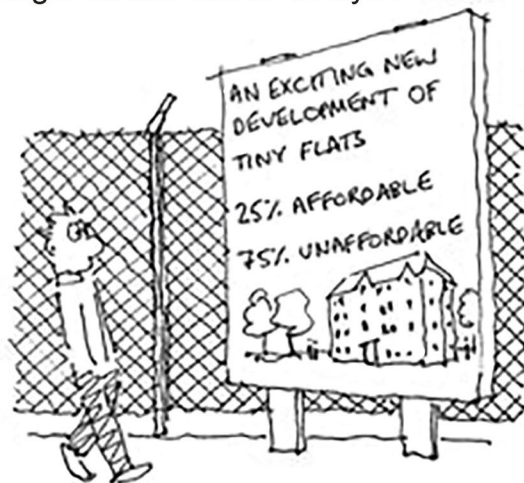


THE SUCCESSFUL STOP HDV CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

On 17 July 2018 the StopHDV (Haringey Development Vehicle) campaign succeeded in getting the Labour Council to scrap its planned sell-off of £2 billion of public assets to a joint delivery vehicle with Australian developers Lendlease.

They succeeded by:

- legal action which delayed the



Council signing the contract with Lendlease in October 2017,

- a grassroots campaign with leafleting, demonstrations, pickets, deputations and so on, and

- Labour Party members deselecting councillors who had voted for the HDV policy.

The last of these changed the balance of power amongst Labour councillors after the May elections and sealed the fate of Claire Kober, former council leader, who resigned as her flagship policy faced defeat. In July 2018, the new Labour cabinet voted not to proceed with the Lendlease deal and instead committed itself to a wholly Council-owned HDV.

Following this success, the StopHDV campaign decided in October, not to disband as the struggle to defend social housing and demand

more council housing is not over. For example, Lendlease has the contract to redevelop Love Lane, aka the High Road West Regeneration, and we still don't know what's happening with the appalling Tottenham and Wood Green Area Action Plans which plan to demolish much social housing. Also, a wholly Council-owned HDV will not stop the Council from more so-called regeneration plans which local residents may oppose. We also believe the Council's plans to redevelop the Latin Market and Ward's Corner are completely flawed.

What makes Haringey such a vibrant area is its diverse social and cultural heritage and we still have a job to do, defending social housing and opposing social cleansing. **La lucha continua!**

Contact the campaign through the website: stopHDV.com

VIVE LES YELLOW VESTS

Fed up with austerity and the government's refusal to help ordinary people the French yellow vests (*gilets jaunes*) have been demonstrating, picketing and rioting. The government has responded not with dialogue but tear gas, water cannons and riot police. They should be ashamed of themselves.

Protests have continued for two months now and they are happening every day, all over France, from the smallest villages to the major cities. People are totally fed up with the politicians, bosses and landlords.

Here we march peacefully from A to B and achieve very little. The French are doing it differently. They have stopped collecting the road tolls, so people can use roads for free. School children have occupied, according to some reports, up to 400 schools. Workers are ignoring the union leadership and are supporting the yellow vests. Motorways and roads are blockaded. Recently protestors tried to break into government buildings in Paris, Montpellier, Troyes and Avignon. In early January they "neutralised,

attacked, or destroyed" 60% of all France's speed cameras, seen as a tax on the poor. A number of women-only demos have also been organised.

One of the great things about the protests is they seem mainly leaderless. Anyone trying to make themselves a spokesperson is ignored by protesters, so no self-elected leader can sell them out.

Using the internet, the yellow vests asked people for their demands. A list of 25 has been drawn up from thousands of replies. These include: house everybody; a minimum wage for everyone; increase state pensions; support for refugees; end austerity; higher benefit payments; rent reductions. They also want a maximum wage, higher taxes on huge companies and the president to resign.

The UK press at times say the demos are organised by the far right, but these are not fascist demands. They come from ordinary people screwed over for years by the elites.

In the UK media we hear about little apart from the "violence". But the protestors are well organised, have

huge support and some excellent demands. The French government needs to decide whose side they are on - big business and the rich or ordinary people? As the protests continue we hope the French authorities buckle to popular pressure.

The movement is spreading. Yellow vest protests have been seen in Holland, Italy, Canada, Germany and Ireland. In Egypt, Iraq, Tunisia and Serbia yellow vest demos against austerity, corruption of officials, and better wages and benefits have been reported.

It seems the French are prepared to step up the pressure until they get what they want. The latest tactic is for everyone to withdraw money from the banks on the same day leading to a financial crash to scare the shit out of the elites - a tactic that is perfectly legal. It's these changing tactics to make the biggest impact that is really inspiring.

In the UK, the only echo of the yellow vest protests has been some far-right boneheads gathering in Parliament Square. In France, fascist elements have increasingly been ejected from the movement. We could learn a lot from the French example.

SCRAP UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Supporters of Universal Credit claim it's being introduced to help claimants by bringing six different benefits under one roof. But the reality is claimants already on this disastrous new benefit are getting into debt, having to use food banks and being evicted from their homes. It's been introduced to save the government money – not to help those of us on benefits. The latest bit of this disgusting attack on those on benefits was rolled out in Haringey in October, and we need to fight back against it.

Its creator, Iain Duncan Smith (former secretary of work and pensions), and the Tories more generally, should be ashamed for depriving families of benefits – that's if any of them had a bloody heart!

Universal Credit will hurt the sick and disabled; jobseekers; workers on low incomes, in insecure jobs, and on zero-hours contracts;

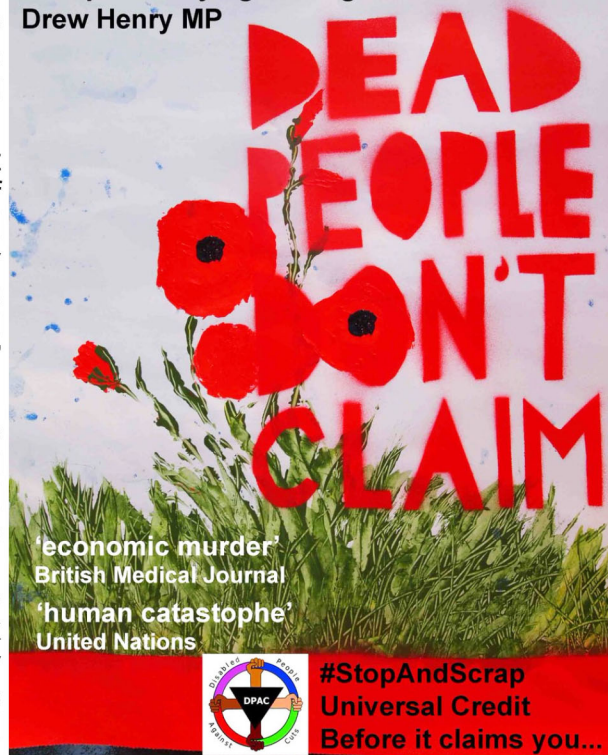
the self-employed; and more generally all of us on benefits AND in work. According to recent statistics 3.8 million people are in insecure employment. More than half of Londoners are living in poverty.

It's leaving families in debt as they are hundreds of pounds worse off and unable to pay bills. Many claimants are living in a constant state of fear and anxiety over their families' future.

We are appalled by the misery already imposed by its introduction and support any campaign to scrap Universal Credit. The solution is not to make Universal Credit work better as the Labour Party and other left-wing parties claim. We need to get rid of poverty and exploitation,

which can only happen by a total overturning of our present system so that we, not the rich or politicians are in charge of our own lives and communities.

"People are dying waiting for their claims."
Drew Henry MP



CAPITALISM IS CATASTROPHE

Global warming is already having an effect on the planet. Extreme weather conditions are being witnessed on a regular basis.

Most people around the world now seem to accept that climate change is real. A 2017 poll across 38 countries showed 61% of respondents view climate change as a major concern, placing it above traditional geopolitics, migration and a failing economic model in terms of perceived threat.

So given that more people are aware of climate change, as well as its devastating consequences, why has so little been done?

The answer is capitalism. Governments worldwide have deregulated everything that could damage profits including protecting the environment.

Yes, the capitalist dream has spiralled out of control leaving the world on the brink of disaster. For 200 years since the dawn of the industrial revolution, factories have been pumping out greenhouse gases, in pursuit of great wealth, like there is no tomorrow. Ironically, there may

not be a tomorrow, or at least not one to look forward to.

The last 25 years have seen a dramatic increase in carbon dioxide emissions, further accelerating global warming. The modern day industrialists have callously chosen to disregard the overwhelming evidence put before them, endangering the lives of future generations and all in the name of profit.

Governments pay lip service to the cries for action to be taken. They are in no rush to act, while in the pay of their corporate masters. Lobbying by the multi-national companies, with their barrel loads of money have kept at bay any effective change in policy or regulation.

At present the scientific consensus is that two degrees of warming this century is highly likely. We are already over one degree. While this would present a huge shock to the global order, with unseen levels of migration, declining crop yields and a massive resource crunch, if that was as bad as it got, we would have had a lucky

escape.

Anything beyond that would see us reach a tipping point, resulting in fertile land turning to desert and increased methane released into the atmosphere.

Make no mistake the warmer the climate gets the harder it will be to alleviate the problem.

Could humanity endure a world three, four, five or six degrees warmer than at present? Perhaps, but with oceans too warm and acidic to maintain life, mass agriculture only possible around the north and south poles, and elevated levels of atmospheric methane – posing problems for anything that breathes – it's difficult to imagine.

Action needs to be taken now. The global powers have proved unwilling to want to change, too busy amassing their fortunes.

The answer to saving the planet from catastrophe lies with us all. We can not allow the rich and powerful to continue behaving in such a reckless way. We have to find a way to take control of our futures and that of our children and grandchildren.

SHOW ME THE WAY TO GO HOME



House prices have risen by 50% in the last ten years, making loads of money for property investors. Meanwhile people on low incomes struggle to find adequate housing for themselves and their families.

Landlords have cashed in as rents soar due to high demand for housing. Government and local authorities are again inept or just not bothered about addressing the problems faced by so many people.

Housing charity Shelter declare, "a home is a fundamental human need and a basic moral right, as vital as education or healthcare. In Britain, that right is being denied to millions of people whose lives are blighted by homelessness, bad conditions, high rents, discrimination and the threat of eviction.

The right to a home isn't just the right to a roof over your head. It's the right to somewhere decent, secure and affordable. It's an outcome of years of failure that across England and Scotland, as many as six million households are either denied this right, or are threatened with losing it".

Haringey is one of the worst affected areas with some 10,000 people, officially homeless

(Department of Communities and Local Government). The real figure is likely much higher, with unknown numbers of rough sleepers, guardians and sofa surfers.

Hardly any social housing has been built in the past 30 years, leaving many people in a state of despair.

Good quality, inexpensive homes are crucial for individuals and families to build a better quality of life, access the services they need and gain greater independence. In contrast, homelessness and poor housing multiply inequalities and have a long-term impact on physical and mental health. This disproportionately affects vulnerable people: older people living isolated lives, the young, those without a support network and adults with disabilities, costing the NHS at least £600m a year.

The last few years have seen Haringey council team up with dodgy property developers, whose only motivation is to build private housing for vast profit while local people are crying out for good quality housing at a price they can afford.

The newly elected council have an opportunity to reverse the past

policies of social cleansing and begin to supply the homes for the thousands of people in need in the borough. Anything less will be a dereliction of duty.

They could start by throwing their weight behind the St Ann's Redevelopment Trust and their ambitious community led plan to build 800 truly affordable homes on the St Ann's hospital site. Self build and modular construction are other cheap and effective ways to provide the housing needed. As is a massive social house building programme. The initiatives are out there.

Haringey council need to respond in a way that positively impacts on thousands of homeless people in the borough.

We all need to support the local groups who are fighting for housing rights.

St Ann's Redevelopment Trust
startharingey.co.uk

Haringey Defend Council Housing
Haringey_DCH@outlook.com

Our Tottenham
ourtottenham.org.uk

Haringey Housing Action Group
haringeyhousingaction.org.uk

FROM DICTATORSHIP TO COLONIALISM — NOW RESISTANCE

When Iraq was invaded by the USA and its partners in 2003 people hoped for peace, security, jobs and prosperity. Alas this never happened. Within a month people in Fallujah protested peacefully against the occupation. Unprovoked, soldiers fired indiscriminately at the crowd, killing 17 demonstrators and injuring 70. In a separate incident, two people were killed and 14 wounded. The aims of America and its allies became crystal clear.

US forces, politicians and the media revived old conflict between Sunni and Shia, leading to a brutal civil war with western Iraq becoming a base for al-Qaida terrorists. Baghdad became the most dangerous city in the world. Thousands of people were killed and injured and many more displaced.

Direct colonisation by the USA claimed to be ended in 2005 with the election of the Iraqi Parliament. Most MPs came from the 70% Shia population. After 37 years of suffering under the Ba'ath party, Iraqis hoped for more but terrorism, deaths and corruption worsened during the next two elections. Isis took control of the second city Mosul in June 2014 and became powerful in many other towns, trading Iraqi oil, imposing taxes and selling weapons, until their defeat in July 2017.

In south and central Iraq conditions also got worse than under Saddam Hussein. In July this led to independent mass protests in Basra against the state and Iranian intervention which spread to many other cities including Baghdad. By September, when the government had failed to deliver on its promises, protesters went back to the streets of Basra. The experiment of a western parliamentary system quickly made Iraqis realise the failed nature of western democracy. In the May 2018 election only 40% of those eligible bothered to vote. The situation remained chaotic. A struggle between the US and Iran over who should be the President and Prime Minister didn't help, with these positions not filled until October when Iran won the battle giving them a big influence over

the government.

In northern Iraq (also known as Iraqi Kurdistan), controlled by the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), life and security was better than other parts of Iraq although the authorities are just as brutal as the central government. Corruption, kidnappings, arrests, killing of journalists and activists and suppressing protests were still common.

In July 2007 KRG forces attacked workers picketing the Tasloja cement factory who were calling for an increase in wages. 13 were injured, some severely. At a peaceful protest in Sulaimanyah in Feb 2011 seven protesters were killed and 40 wounded.

Since 2016 the KRG have implemented austerity measures which are causing great hardship to workers, the self-employed and companies who have government contracts. Public sector employees often get less than 2/3rds of their salary, paid months in arrears.

In northern Iraq, controlled by the Kurds, Saddam Hussein's rule ended after the 1991 uprising and the first Kurdistan elections were in May 1992. Since then there have been three more elections, most recently in September 2018. Due to a boycott campaign by leftists, communist and anarchists, the true percentage of voters in the second largest city, Sulaimanyah, was just 31% and in many others places it was still less than 50%. However, the ruling parties fiddled the ballot papers for their own benefit.

The Referendum for Independence in Iraqi Kurdistan took place in May 2017 and was opposed by the Iraqi government in Baghdad, Iran, Turkey, the US and many western countries. The Kurds paid heavily for this. In October 2017 the KRG lost 50% of its territories as the Iraqi forces occupied the Kurdish towns and villages including Kirkuk in revenge over the referendum.

This short history of parliamentary democracy in Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan showed many people that just changing leadership



alone, without changing the whole system, cannot bring the people what they want. This is why the people now organise frequent rallies, protests, demonstration and call for boycotting the elections.

Many people, in large parts of Iraq, feel these tactics alone are not enough to bring about justice, freedom and equality. In Sulaimanyah, activists and anarchists have started non-hierarchical, independent local groups under the name of the Anarchist Forum. They have held open public meetings promoting anarchism as an alternative and calling for the rejection of all political parties, replacing them with local people's assemblies.

Opposing the parliamentary system, and developing direct democracy and mass resistance, they reject hierarchical organisations and want to replace them with self-organisation. They call for the abolition of the state and private ownership, and encourage a cooperative way of organising. They aim to do away with centralism in favour of local direct action, and are trying to reach out to other parts of Kurdistan to do the same.

For further reading see

- libcom.org/library/mass-protest-central-southern-iraq
- anarkismo.net/article/31078
- libcom.org/library/protest-basra-s-city-south-iraq-continues

SICK JOKE

Health officials at NHS England are running so-called consultation for a new model of health and social care provision that threatens the break-up of the NHS into "business units" run by "Integrated Care Providers" (ICPs). It's really another step towards privatisation. This consultation has hardly been publicised and is vague about the full extent of the changes.

ICPs will be a serious threat to a publicly owned and run NHS. They adopt the pretence of integrating health and social care to hide the true intent. Each "business unit" would control spending and rationing of healthcare for up to 500,000 people for 15 years.

ICPs will deliver the Tories' dangerous new restructuring plans which could see bits of the NHS managed by non-NHS, non-statutory, less accountable bodies. ICP contracts will disintegrate the NHS; give control to private companies with no scrutiny; threaten public accountability; and hand over control of bits of the NHS to profit driven capitalists for up to 15 years.

The nationwide health campaign group Keep Our NHS Public (KONP) are calling on the NHS to abandon the ICP contracts.

In its place they want:

- the government to end the failed NHS contracting system and to re-nationalise the NHS,
- any organisation delivering integrated care to patients to be a statutorily protected NHS organisations,
- the state to commit to properly funding and staffing health and social care,
- Social Care be brought back into public provision, free at point of use.

If you support these demands go on-line and sign the KONP petition weownit.org.uk/ICP-petition-NHS

For more information and how to oppose this creeping privatisation see keepournhspublic.com/news/icps-what-are-they

Or see Haringey KONP's website haringeykonp.org

haringey.org.uk

FAIR PLAY FOR BROADWATER FARM RESIDENTS

The Tangmere and Northolt housing blocks on Broadwater Farm were originally built using something called the Large Panel System in the 1960s, and now need safety strengthening works.

At first Haringey Council said the two blocks had to be demolished. Following a massive local campaign opposing the previous Council's threat of demolition of the whole estate, many believe the current Council still has a hidden demolition agenda.

To compound the controversy, the replacement homes offered to tenants were often unsuitable e.g. fewer bedrooms than at present. And "home loss payments" would only be paid to home owners if blocks were demolished rather than refurbished. The Council said they needed to turn off the gas supply but refused to provide emergency heating. These scare tactics were used to try and move people out of the blocks quickly.

Faced with the Residents

Association lobbying and protests, the Council backed down on the number of bedrooms, the "home loss" payments", and the emergency heating – but are still pressurising residents to move out to make way for demolition. The Council are also eyeing up nearby community buildings on the estate for potential redevelopment.

Many residents want strengthening and improvements of the two threatened blocks. This way people won't need to move out of the place they call home and communities won't be broken up.

Following uproar across London over property-developer threats to social housing, and defective so-called 'consultations', the Mayor of London has called for ballots on most estates facing demolition proposals. The Residents Association is demanding a ballot of the affected residents on Broadwater Farm to see what they want – not what's

BREXIT – SHOULD WE STAY OR SHOULD WE GO?

Why do so many people in this country put their faith in politicians and a political system that doesn't work for them?

It's quite clear that in the run up to the referendum the government (which expected a remain vote) did little work looking into the effects of a brexit vote. Panic ensued, Cameron & Osbourne deserted the sinking ship and civil servants were told to find a way forward some two years

too late.

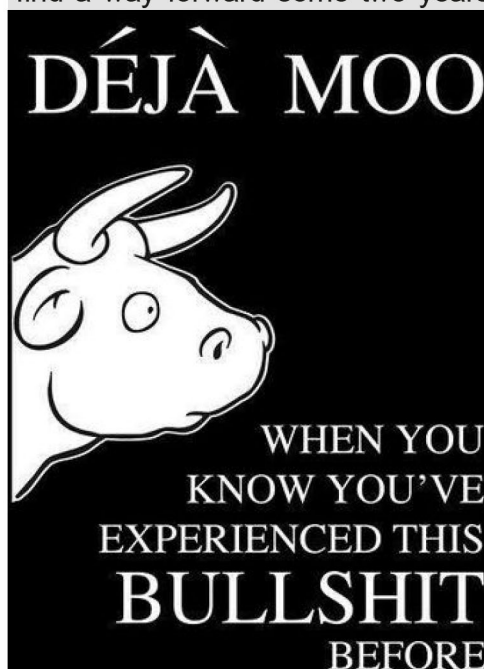
Government incompetence has left people wondering exactly what the future holds for them. This incompetence comes as no surprise to us.

There is no doubt both campaigns lied to us in an attempt to win our votes. Brexiteers who voted so power could be taken away from European bureaucrats in favour of us taking control were living in dream land. Westminster bureaucrats are no different - just another set of elites serving their own interests.

We will have no say in future decisions affecting us and little influence in the direction the country goes. To the elites, whether in Europe or Westminster, our opinion doesn't matter. We are irrelevant. The bigwigs will make the decisions and we will just get shafted as normal.

Whether we are better in Europe or not isn't really the point. The fact is, either way, in or out, life goes on. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer. In or out there will be no real change for the majority of us.

The only way forward is to organize locally and fight for the changes we want together.



Find Haringey Solidarity Group on Facebook

Equal



Fair



WE ♥ TAG

For anyone who follows what's happening in Haringey you will know that Haringey Council agreed to knock down part of Love Lane estate in Tottenham to build a walkway between the new spurs ground and White Hart Lane train station. Yep, they are demolishing hundreds of much needed homes for a bloody footpath so spurs fans can get between the ground and station a little bit quicker. We know – it's totally mad.

The council has started moving tenants out and for now they are using the homes as temporary accommodation for families on their housing waiting list. But these families have absolutely no rights and could be moved again at any time.

But unlike others who might just accept this disgusting state of affairs, the families in temporary accommodation at Love Lane are fighting back. They have formed themselves into a tenants group and are fighting for their rights and we should all be supporting them.

They have met with the council leadership and are contacting everyone on the estate to get involved and find out their views. They are also making their voice heard in the local, and hopefully national, media.

There could well be a vote about the estate's future but even if they win this vote it doesn't mean the council have to listen. So they, and us as well, need to keep pressure on Haringey Council.

There are stories of some of these tenants being mistreated and abused and this needs to be fought against and we all need to support them. But as importantly, all the tenants on Love Lane should be offered permanent accommodation in Haringey, where their kids go to school and where they call home. People shouldn't be pushed from one makeshift home to another for years.

Support Love Lane Temporary Accommodation Group!

For more information contact taglovelane@btinternet.com

URGENT – GET RID OF ARGENT

Property developers Argent are planning large-scale regeneration of Tottenham Hale. Although some local people welcome the changes, there is significant opposition from both residents and other parties.

The main issue with Argent's plans is the change of Tottenham Hale's landscape. The highest building proposed is 38 storeys, which Hackney Council has noted as being visible from Springfield Park. Residents close to the development, such as those living near the former Welbourne site on Tamar Way and Fairbanks Road, will have significant loss of light. Their view will transform from ancient trees (sold off by Transport for London) to concrete monstrosities. After the Grenfell disaster, there is also concern about fire safety of such high buildings.

The new homes are not for local working-class people. Argent have amended their proposals to contain more 'affordable' housing, yet this is still out of reach for the average Tottenham resident who lacks the income to make a deposit. Indeed, those opposed to Argent feel

that, along with the Tottenham Hotspur redevelopments, locals are being priced out of the area. Increased traffic from new residents and visitors to the proposed health centre will strain parking in Tottenham Hale, which already suffers from problems with non-residents. Although Argent state that new residents will not be entitled to parking, they cannot guarantee people won't park their car inappropriately. So why don't Argent provide enough spaces within the development? Pollution will also be heightened. Two primary schools in the vicinity are amongst the top 50 worst for pollution in London, so their health, in addition to that of locals, is at risk.

Overall, many residents of Tottenham Hale feel neglected by Haringey council and Argent. Resident associations such as Chestnut Estate and Dowsett Road are building a campaign and working with those parties to reach a compromise to fit the ever-growing population of London.

Email CRATottenhamN17@gmail.com

Blog saveourtottenham.wordpress.com

THE GREAT INJUSTICE

Gordon Brown, writing in the Guardian, hit one poverty nail on the head but missed another. He rightly claimed Tory benefit cuts will spark poll tax style chaos and went on to say: "The greatest injustice of all is children having to go to school ill clad and hungry" (although at Haringey Independent we reckon there are a lot more injustices – and some Brown was responsible for). The injustice is even greater when homeless families, with low incomes paying high rents, are shunted from one home to another in the merciless UK housing market.

One Haringey family we know of has been moved five times in ten years and they still don't have a permanent home. The first move came when their landlord's property was repossessed by the mortgage company. Then in and out of a short-hold tenancy that came to an end, out of a flat when an upstairs toilet leaking into their kitchen, into a homeless hostel shared with single adults with

addictions, and now in a council estate due for demolition. All that while trying to keep a job and with huge disruption of their children's education.

Since 2010 the number of homeless families in temporary accommodation in England increased by 65% to 79,880, including 123,000 children. The Trust for London reckon 4,400 Haringey families are in temporary accommodation. Universal Credit will only increase this number. These families face being forced out of council homes and into paying unaffordable rents to private landlords. This is done with a threat to wash the council's hands of any responsibility if a family refuse the first and only offer of temporary accommodation.

The council claims it will build 1,000 new council homes but this is nowhere near enough to meet the demand. We need to find ways to house all these families permanently and in good quality secure homes.

WHO WE ARE

In 1991, Haringey Solidarity Group (HSG) emerged from the Anti-Poll Tax campaign. We wanted to create a long-term, vibrant, non-hierarchical group, unlike political parties where ambitions and posturing displace real politics.

We believe in ridding ourselves of the current system which places profit and power before people's needs. This involves getting organised, fighting back and collectively taking those decisions which affect our daily lives.

We think people should take control of their community and workplace struggles, support each other, encourage practical solidarity, build the necessary skills and knowledge for these struggles and generate strong, permanent, grassroots networks.

Many of us are involved with local residents', community and campaign groups within the borough. We support workers in dispute, campaigns against public service cuts and threatened community amenities. We are active on environmental, housing and claimants' issues and resist state controls.

Come and share your views at our monthly meeting. We welcome your involvement and with practical activities including distributing this newsletter and producing other materials including posters and leaflets.

For more about HSG, visit www.haringey.org.uk, befriend us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter @_hsg_, contact us at PO Box 2474, London N8, phone 0845 2235270 or email info@haringey.org.uk

